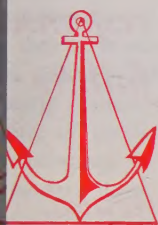


Professor David Ford examining the progress of the new building for the Faculty of Theology at the University of Cambridge



Anglican Identity in England

By David F Ford

I have seen the Church of England in recent years from various angles, ranging from being a Churchwarden in inner-city Birmingham, through a variety of parishes, several diocesan conferences for clergy and laity, General Synod, the 1998 Lambeth Conference, and now St Bene't's in Cambridge. I have been struck again and again by the gap between, on the one hand, the perceptions gained through that close involvement and, on the other, impressions coming through the media and casual conversations. I was usually encouraged by what I saw and learnt directly of the Church of England, whereas most of the other impressions were largely unappreciative. I do not think this is just because of 'media bias' or prejudice. The reasons are deeper – something to do with the nature of the Church of England. So I want to try to describe, in brief, my own appreciative conclusions about Anglican identity in England.

A Complex Identity:

wisdom through historical experience

The basic point is that it is a complex identity, even messy. This gives endless scope for criticism and misrepresentation, but it can also be appreciated as a strength with considerable potential. It cannot be understood without a little history.

The history includes appreciating the Church's first millennium and a half. In particular, it is a classic and I think enduringly

important characteristic of Anglican tradition that we identify strongly with the early Church during its first six centuries or so. I would argue that any vision for the future which disowns or plays down this formative period is unwise. That does not exclude fresh interpretations and critiques. But they need to lead us inside the dynamics of the shaping of the church and its theology, in all their messiness and their religious, ethical and political complexity. It is about a wisdom

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The
shape of
things to
come

Church and State, the education of the nation's children, the church's life and mission, the religious life – all these in the early days of a new century and millennium are areas of accelerating change. Is God in the change, or are we witnessing the advancing tide of relentless secularisation?

Our contributors in this issue of *franciscan* explore this question and find, in the discernible shape of things to come, grounds for the hope of which the anchor is a symbol used by the writer to the Hebrews. May our readers share this hope!

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formed in and through the contingencies of history.

If I were choosing just one lesson for us to learn from this period, it would be what Averil Cameron and Frances Young both stress in their fine studies: how the church engaged with all dimensions of the Roman Empire's culture; how it used multiple strategies, and was inventive and often opportunist in its communication; and, above all, how its permeation of the Empire was closely tied to the immense amount of energy, resources and dedication it applied to education - learning and teaching the faith - at all levels.

The Reformation period, up to the seventeenth-century Anglican settlement, is the most critical one for what is most distinctively Anglican. I think it is hard to over-estimate how crucial this still is. The Reformation, together with the horrendous religious wars that followed it, was the founding trauma of modern Europe, and in England included the Civil War and the execution of Charles I. In this period, Christianity not only discredited itself but failed to ensure the flourishing of societies. Large parts of Europe were devastated. We live in the aftermath of this failure, in which Christianity has been tried and found not only wanting but destructive in the public realm. Christianity gave rise to fragmentation, dissension, confusion and war as never before in its history.

The identity of our church, which is centred in worship and tries to serve the common good, has many dimensions. We need to have a fresh start in sustaining and renewing this complex identity. I see this as an ecology in which every level is vital, but some levels are far more vulnerable . . . than others.

But that was not all. There was at the same time an intensive attempt, on both the Protestant and Catholic sides, to re-identify the heart of Christian faith, to reappropriate its basic dynamisms. All parties tried to refashion history in conformity with their ideas - Lutheran, Calvinist, Puritan, Roman Catholic. Anglicanism was a response to this lively and deadly conflict. It was a settlement, a Catholic and Reformed Christianity allied with historical realism. *Anglicanism is a Christian response to Christian failure and to Christian renewal.* We do not go for complete theological blueprints: they run the risks of the Thirty-Years' War or the Civil War. We make settlements; settlement after settlement. I do not claim this is unique to Anglicanism; it

is obviously a dimension of every church. But there is something to be learnt for the future from the way that, at its best, our Church has tried to learn from the traumas of history, from conflicts between rival ways of ordering the church, and the need for settlements which value the flourishing of state and society and try to repair damaged history. There is a great deal to repent of, but it is important to try to become somewhat clearer than we usually are about what there is to be grateful for.

Last year's Lambeth Conference brought home to me the urgency of this need. There was quite a poignant gap in the Conference between, on the one hand, the widespread sense of Anglican family feeling, especially seen in the celebrations of the eucharist, the Bible studies and the small group discussions and, on the other hand, a striking inability to articulate it in convincing ways. In the absence of convincingly Anglican ways, true to the complex interweavings with history that have made the Communion what it is, other more articulate theologies, together with what I would call well-packaged ideologies, rushed in to fill the vacuum. In the process, there was an uneasy feeling that something precious was not being done justice to.

A Complex Identity: three points for the future

So what needs to be said today about this identity? I will suggest a few basic points with the future of the Church of England in mind.

1. God is the secret of the common good, salvation, peace and any worthwhile future; and our first call is to worship God, to love with all our hearts, minds, souls and strength the God who loves us, and to invite others to gather with us. *Right worship is connected with a good society*; we should not be surprised if a society which focuses its desires on things other than God goes wrong; but we should be all the more dedicated to worship and prayer on its behalf, and to summoning it to worship for its own good and for the good of all. It is right that we continue to put such an immense amount of time, energy and resources, in buildings and clergy, into regular worship.

2. We still need to try to make settlements for the common good and to mend damaged histories, both personal and social. Each family is a settlement; so is each school, each parish, each city or county council, each business, each diocese; each life. *Well-ordered, faithful lives in well-ordered, just institutions, constantly shaping appropriate settlements and trying to improve things incrementally*: that is not a sensational slogan, but it is one of the deepest needs if church and society is to flourish. We need to seek constant renewal of the wisdom that leads to such settlements in all the changes and overwhelmings of our time. Anglicanism was born to meet such a need in overwhelming times.

3. The identity of our Church, which is centred in worship and tries to serve the common good, has many dimensions. We

need to have a fresh start in sustaining and renewing this complex identity. I see this as an ecology in which every level is vital, but some levels are far more vulnerable (and their importance far less obvious) than others. My own experience in the church has been of a series of 'conversions' to one level after another - parish congregation, small group, local community, diocese, nation, and global communication. And I have found myself convinced of the crucial importance of institutions of various sorts for the church to fulfil its two basic types of task: building up worshipping communities; and doing 'chaplaincy work' that serves the flourishing of individuals and institutions in the contingencies of life and death.

Plus One More

There is a further point which has increasingly impressed me as perhaps the single most urgent matter if the worship, faithful lives, and various institutional levels are to thrive. It is the one noted above concerning the early centuries of Christianity; *the priority of teaching and learning the Christian faith.*

*Anglicanism
is a Christian response
to Christian failure
and to
Christian renewal.*

In a knowledge-based, information-rich 'learning society', permeated by many media, a church like ours, which is so interwoven with society and tends to be suspicious of rigid boundaries, needs to be especially alert, thoughtful and creative in how it teaches and learns the faith. How do we and our children 'learn Christ' today? How can we be literally disciples, *mathetai*, learners? How can we have educational settlements that improve the situation in every family, home group, parish, school, diocese and university?

Futurology

The Christian version of futurology as we enter the new millennium is not to speculate about this and the other points in terms of trends and numbers. It is rather to do two things. First, to pray about them - both in gratitude that appreciates what has been given, and also in urgent intercession. Second, to be learners who lead faithful, worshipping lives in the church and for the world. That is what will make most difference in the third millennium, as in previous ones. ■

Dr David Ford

*is Regius Professor of Theology in the
University of Cambridge.*

Mission Moves On

by Mark Oxbrow

At seven-thirty at night the air is still and sticky. With rock music drifting in through the open window of his fifth-floor room, Linggi switches on his computer to collect his email. Outside, other engineering students are returning from night prayers at the university mosque. Linggi, however, is eagerly searching his screen for one particular message – the next exchange in an email Bible study. At home, in Sibuluan, his family mostly follow the traditional religious practices of the Iban, the tribal people of East Malaysia, but as a young man making his way into a new millennium, Linggi has embarked on the demanding road of Christian discipleship. I met Linggi once in 1997 but, over thousands of miles of cyberspace, we regularly study the Bible together. Mission is changing.

Three hundred years ago, it was Thomas Bray, the founding father of both the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) who petitioned King William in these words: 'The numbers of the inhabitants of your majesty's provinces in America have of late years greatly increased. They are in very much want of instruction in the Christian religion, and in some of them utterly destitute of the same, they not being able, of themselves, to raise a sufficient maintenance for an orthodox clergy to live amongst them and to make such other provision as shall be necessary for the

find some of the triumphalist speeches delivered at that time almost too embarrassing to read.

Two world wars, the collapse of empire, the growth of Asian economies, the arrival of peoples of many faiths in Britain and, perhaps more importantly, the rapid growth of large Christian communities in the southern hemisphere, have radically changed the way we think about mission today. In 1899, dozens of diocesan bishops, members of parliament, and hundreds of clergy and lay people attended seven days of celebrations in Exeter Hall for the CMS centenary. In 1999, a much more modest, but perhaps more vibrant, gathering marked the bicentenary of CMS in a tent on Clapham Common. Is this a sign of decline, of failure or, perhaps, of re-focused priorities? I want to argue that as we enter the third Christian millennium we are seeing a recovery of the core of mission, set free from the constraints of imperialism, materialism and cultural myopia.

One of the glorious facts of life today is that most Christian mission does not originate in the West. The great army of those whom God is calling today to leave their homes and go to another place in the service of the Gospel are not white – they are Brazilians, Koreans, Indians and Nigerians. Even in the Anglican Communion, the impetus for new movements in mission often comes from the South. The birth of the Church of Nigeria Missionary Society, and its rapid deployment of missionaries just two years after its formation, is an encouragement to us all. The shift in Christian demography to the South also challenges us to revisit inherited power structures within our Churches. How much longer can Rome, Geneva, Istanbul and Canterbury remain the centres of 'control' within the Christian family? When will the vibrant theologising of Asia, Africa and Latin America begin to replace the propagation of classical European theological systems? How much longer can American and European

mission agencies use the might of the dollar to lead the way in mission studies and strategies for mission around the world? Letting go the strings of power, we might release also a wonderful renewal of the Spirit, brought to us by our sisters and brothers in the South.

At the end of the second world war, the refugee crisis in Europe led to the formation of both Christian and secular 'aid agencies'. In this crisis situation, Oxfam, Christian Aid and others took on part of the rôle that had previously been the responsibility of mission agencies. Today, we have, within the church in Britain, a number of very effective aid and development agencies – Christian Aid, Tear Fund, World Vision, etc. – who have, over the years, relieved the mission agencies of a major aspect of the work they were doing before 1945. As long as the church continues to hold together the vital practical and spiritual aspects of mission, then the development and mission agencies can work effectively together. There is, however, a worrying trend within the churches, a symptom perhaps of our materialistic age, which tends to focus on the immediate humanitarian needs of others whilst neglecting their spiritual nourishment. A recent national opinion poll asked members of the public what types of charitable work overseas they would support. Respondents ranked disaster aid top, then relief work, then medical work and development, with peace and reconciliation work and spiritual support at the very bottom. Even mission agencies, like my own, find it much easier to raise funds for medical work than for evangelism, discipleship training or the equipping of leaders in the church. The effective partnership that exists 'in the field' between Christian mission and development agencies needs to be matched by an understanding within the church of the indivisible nature of mission – the mission of Jesus who came that we 'might have life in all its fullness', spiritual as well as psychological and material.

What are the priorities in mission as we enter 2000? I would like to focus on just four which seem to me to be issues that are

Continued on page 4

The effective partnership that exists 'in the field' between Christian mission and development agencies needs to be matched by an understanding within the church of the indivisible nature of mission.

propagation of the Gospel in those parts.'

A hundred years later, in 1799, the members of the Clapham Sect, under the leadership of John Venn, established the Church Mission Society (CMS) observing that, 'The whole continent of Africa, and that of Asia also, are open to the missionary labours of the Church of England.' As SPG and CMS held their respective bicentenary and centenary celebrations a hundred years ago, there was not even the slightest hint of doubting the superiority of the religion and culture of the British Empire. Christian mission was the responsibility of western Christendom and it was proving to be very successful. Today, we



Canon Mark Oxbrow is Regional Director, Europe, of the Church Mission Society.

Continued from page 3

crying out to be addressed by any church which is serious about mission today.

As Jesus paid special attention to those who were forced to exist on the margins of society, so today Christians have a special responsibility to reach out to those who are marginalised within our global community. It has often been the experience of the church that God speaks to us most clearly through those whom society rejects. I therefore prefer to speak of mission 'with', rather than 'to', the marginalised. At the macro level, we are called to focus on the continent of Africa, burdened with debt, economic stagnation, corruption, war and democracy distorted by tribalism. At a different level, we will find ourselves working with refugees, women, the disabled and young people. At the micro level, we must listen to those whose race, class, sexuality, theology or personality has led to their exclusion from the fellowship of the church.

Two centuries ago, most British Christians would have spoken of Hindus, Buddhists or Muslims as 'heathen needing to be freed from the snares of the devil'. Today, a significant number would regard members of other faith communities with respect and would hold back from sharing the gospel with them, believing that they have 'their own way to God'.

Neither position does justice to the mission to which we are called. Today, we are called to walk the challenging road of respect for, and openness to, other religious traditions whilst maintaining a clear witness to the unique experience of God in Jesus Christ which is ours. This will require tough theology, honest debate and courageous witness.

My last two priorities are linked. As the clock ticks past midnight on 1 January 2000, we will enter a world in which more than half the population live in urban environments. Much mission over the last three centuries has spoken effectively to agrarian society but has had little to say to the city dweller. Mission today needs to discover new ways of inviting people to be church in the city. The communications revolution, and a consequent globalisation of culture, means that the secularist materialism of the West is fast becoming the predominant world-view of civil servants in Bangalore and students in Nairobi, as well as city slickers in London. Perhaps the most urgent need in the coming years will be for an understanding of the gospel which speaks powerfully into a postmodern, materialistic, narcissistic culture. In CMS, we have just launched a major research programme to tackle this issue, but much more work will be required if we are to have anything meaningful to say to generations to come.

As we study the scriptures together, and Linggi teaches me the significance of ancestors in my understanding of being who I am in Christ today, I long to share with him my real excitement for mission into the third Christian millennium. ■

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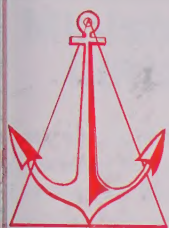
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Church & State

by

Brother Tristram SSF



In 1884, John Murray wrote that, 'So long as the middle classes remain the governing body and main power in the nation, so long will the Church of England remain as the representative of their religious peculiarities and convictions . . . It is only when political power shall have been transferred to new hands, and new classes shall have supplanted the old, that the Church of England will cease to be their exclusive representative . . . only then will it be called upon to modify its teaching and enlarge its sympathies.' What Murray didn't realise was that newly-emerging, governing classes become the new middle classes and, after reforming the peripherals of life to maintain some semblance of honour, proceed to maintain the new status quo in a manner that would shame even the proverbial Medes and Persians.

What has changed since Victorian times is that this particular State has become effectively secularised and now, under the fiction of neutrality, weakens the basic tenets of the Christian faith.

Whilst it is the current morality of English society which alone determines the legislation of the State, unfortunately the confusing of current, western morality with the Christian ethic is, in some minds, complete. So how should the Church go about regaining its God-given capacity to say what it thinks without it being accused of treachery by its confrere the State? It seems clear to me that the only way to sever the 'established' relationship between Church and State.

It would be too easy to talk about Church and State in terms of the political appointment of bishops, the position of the Monarch, the controlling of the Church's liturgy and orders by a Parliament not merely of non-Anglicans but largely of non-Christians, and so on. The real difficulty then would be for Establishmentarians to avoid blushing. No, the real issue is the religious one, the quasi-heresy of Erastianism (that doctrine that

asserts the ascendancy of the State over the Church in matters ecclesiastical) versus free will.

It is interesting that one of the basic principles of the teaching of Erastus was that the said State had to profess but one religion. Some religious leaders have attempted to constitute such a national identity, and some are still trying, but putting on one side the sheer impossibility of such a task, what does such a position say in the context of Christianity?

That question might well be answered by the posing of a few rhetorical questions. First, we know that "the truth shall set us free": if 'free' is freedom not to think freely, what happens to 'truth'? Second, it might be said that the basic problem is one of fear: fear of losing 'authority', of losing 'the ear of those with real control', of not being close enough to power to influence it.

However, is it possible to match any of these assertions against any known teaching of Christ? Does the ethical stance of the Church really affect political thinking or effect political change? Can the Church imagine

that its spiritual freedom is enhanced by such subjugation? Third, does the enjoyment of ceremonial require attachment to that which can in some odd way defend and sustain it, some would say kid it into some belief in its own importance?

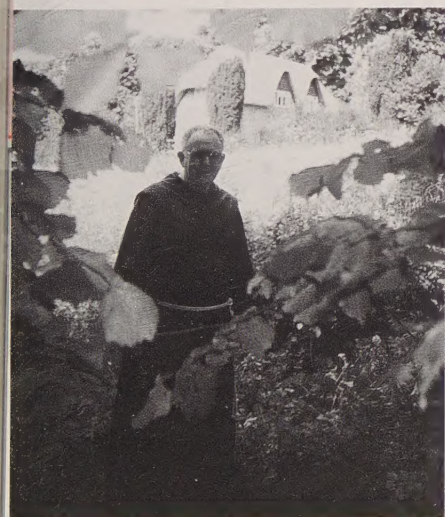
And what of the situation in reverse: what does the State get from its relationship with the Church? Those who support the relationship would probably say that the Church's influence can only be for good, and that is difficult to refute. But the particular kudos the State in fact gains has to be respectability. Politics is largely a dirty business, not improved by the mud-slinging in which it so regularly indulges. It needs something to give it the appearance of being whiter than white. What better than the cloak of the Church's morality and tolerance.

So what of Disestablishment? It would be foolish to think that the Church could gain spiritual freedom without making a sacrifice of its material interests, and how great that sacrifice might be would be decided by the State.

But the State, and I imagine particularly the Crown, would not want to give the appearance of being ungenerous. So why should not the leaders of Church and State agree to elevate the question of Disestablishment above the level of a petty quarrel and to answer it in the spirit of a wider patriotism which would cause little injury and leave to the future no irksome memories?

As a Christian born into the Church of England, I have an ungrudging love and regard for it. And for that love to be sustained, we each have to retain our integrity. With God's grace, we all will. However, I can only concur with Hensley Henson, who said a century ago, "Whatever fortunes may be reserved for the Church of England, may God in his mercy preserve it from the ignominious security of a tame Church in a secularised State!"

And as someone even Greater said two millennia ago, "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt has lost its savour, what use is it? It is good for nothing but to be thrown away and trodden under foot." ■



Brother Tristram is a representative of the Religious Communities on the General Synod of the Church of England.



Theme Prayer

O God,
who set before us the great hope
that your kingdom shall come on earth
and taught us to pray for its coming:
give us grace to discern the signs of its dawning
and to work for the perfect day
when the whole world shall reflect your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Hawks and Hunting:

Images of Religious Life

by Sister Gillian Mary SSC

Hawks and hunting may not seem the most obvious images for Religious Life, yet Franciscans will find a hawk in Assisi. In the Lower Basilica a fresco by Simone Martini shows Saint Martin receiving his investiture as a knight from the Emperor Constantine. Behind the Emperor stands a courtier with a hawk on his fist. It is possible that both Francis and Clare in their youth handled hawks. Even if not, they would both have been familiar with hunting, which was woven into the fabric of medieval society.

Dedicated Enjoyment

Medieval literature on hunting is permeated by a sense of dedicated enjoyment. Planning the chase was a mental challenge, taking part in it physically and emotionally satisfying, and the spoils delighted the stomach. Religious Life involves the whole person, challenging and releasing physical, emotional and spiritual energies. Responding to the call of Christ, living the Gospel life in community under vows, demands wholehearted dedication. Francis said: "We will learn through the Gospels how the Lord instructed his disciples ... this is our life and our Rule." In our generation the whole concept of rule and authority has undergone a sea-change. Religious life can give significant witness to a society which undermines both authority and community. It also can and should bear fruit in enjoyment. Despite the tensions inevitably arising when any group of people live together, Religious stand together before God day by day and hear the Scriptures constantly moving them to reconciliation. In that spirit of repentance, Francis challenges us: "Show yourself always as having joy"; not of course the joy of the medieval huntsman, but something nearer the incarnational joy of the Visitation.

Necessary for Food

As hunting provided food for the table, so Religious Life nourishes the Church. The rhythm of the life flows from chapel to refectory. The Word heard and food eaten witness to priorities. Many communities buy food fairly traded and are concerned about ethical issues in food production. All bear witness to the priority of the Word of God. In our consumer society eating or fasting with simplicity and thanksgiving can be a prophetic sign. Practising due respect for the body and its needs, we seek also to provide the spiritual nourishment for individual and community which will build up the Body of Christ.

Avoiding Idleness

"A good huntsman can never be prey to any of the Seven Deadly Sins" was the astonishing claim made by the greatest medieval Spanish authority on falconry. That was because hunting precluded idleness. Today Religious

sisters and brothers would laugh at the idea that they had time to be idle! With resources stretched over too few people, the roots of sin may well lie in over-activity. Poverty for many Religious Communities lies in this area. The challenge is to keep this form of poverty both practical and dedicated, to keep priorities alive for necessary spiritual sustenance. Otherwise over-work may occasion a kind of chronic sinfulness.

Magnificencia

What did Francis make of the extravagances of the medieval hunt, the great feasts, the gorgeous apparel of the huntsmen, their retinues and their horses? Even the hawks were splendidly attired. The splendour displays the riches, dignity and good taste of the hunters while avoiding vulgarity. One Spanish writer defends falconry as exhibiting the virtue Aristotle called *Magnificencia*, a mean between extremes in the use of wealth.

'Saint of excess', Francis literally stripped himself of his clothes at the episcopal court. In his radical poverty he rejected the Aristotelian understanding of virtue. For him extreme poverty, voluntarily undertaken as the way of Christ, was a specifically Christian virtue. What would Francis have made of the costly frescoes in the Basilica at Assisi?

They celebrate his life marvellously but seem at odds with his own practice of poverty. Is there an inescapable tension here between religious poverty and the right use of wealth for God's glory?

This may well be so in Religious Life today, given that Religious enjoy material support and companionship into old age, a roof over their heads and the security of a vocation without redundancy. We use our 'wealth' responsibly, yet the poor are always with us. They are caught in the unjust structures of society and trapped by its economic forces. Our prophetic witness as Religious in challenging social injustice is vital.

Lover and Beloved

The chase in hunting has something in common with courtship. A medieval German manuscript of 1300 has an amusing illustration of courtly love. A hawker languidly lies on the lap of his lady, wooing her while his hawk feeds on his left fist! Lover courting beloved, God courting his beloved people: similar images recur throughout secular and Biblical literature.

Franciscan spirituality centres on God the Lover who became Incarnate to seek out and save his people. In costly sharing of the life of Love, Francis discovered a deep joy in the midst of suffering – the joy of 'being with' his Beloved. Conformed to Christ, he was taken into the mystery of Cross and Resurrection. Religious Communities must pray that their novices grow in awareness of the Lover God. Sustained by that love, they will learn the redemptive way of the Cross.

Training

The medieval training of hawks may provide insight into the patterns of formation which



Sister Gillian Mary SSC was until recently Reverend Mother of the Society of the Sacred Cross, at Tymawr

Minister's Letter

**Sister Joyce CSF,
Minister Provincial of the First Order Sisters
of the European Province, writes:**



I am conscious that this is the first issue of the *Franciscan* for the new Millennium. Here in London, we have been very aware of the building of the Dome at Greenwich, changing the shape of the skyline, and all the discussion about the contents of its various zones; also the London Eye (a giant Ferris wheel) now dominates the Thames South Bank at Westminster. Both structures have consumed vast financial resources to erect, but will also attract many to view and ride.

However there is yet another London millennium project that has hardly rated much media attention but which provides for me a more appropriate message for the new era. That is the sculpture that has been placed in Trafalgar Square on the fourth plinth, vacant for so many years. It is an apparently small figure (though life size) of Christ standing on one edge of the pillar, a crown of thorns on his head, his hands tied behind his back. It is by Mark Wallinger and titled *Ecce Homo*. The contrast of this figure of Christ in pale-coloured material with the rest of the Square may be imagined easily; the triumphalism of Nelson's column, the enormous black horses with their riders on the other pillars. Any comparison with either the Dome or the Eye pales into insignificance. However, it proclaims the power of a very different kind

of victory, the message of the Cross, largely ignored by most of the thousands of people who visit or pass by the Square each day, but for those who have eyes to see, it cannot be disregarded. If you haven't seen it yet, do make a pilgrimage there, if possible, to see for yourself. Nevertheless, the miracle is that this sculpture is there at all, albeit not permanently as yet, to proclaim in its smallness the magnitude of the gospel message of Christ's triumph over death and the new life on offer for those who follow in his footsteps.

In September we held our First Order Chapters in Brisbane, Australia. I want to share with you some excerpts from the letter sent from the Chapter to all brothers and sisters, as we tried to capture something of what our smallness might mean for us:

"As we approach the new millennium and begin to think about how we can observe and celebrate this event, we Franciscans have one really important thing to offer: ourselves! Our individual stories and our common life rooted in the Franciscan story cohere around the fact of our minority. Littleness is our greatest gift and challenge to the new millennium . . .

"The Franciscan charism of trying things out and considering new ways holds out the possibility of Jubilee: release from routine

thinking, redemption from debt and the hope of rebuilding human communities.

"As we try to recognise the truth about ourselves and God, that we are the little brothers and sisters of Jesus in the way of Francis, then God can build us into a community of grace and love. Our victories and failures bear witness, to those we would help, of God's power, love and the Gospel way of life."

May God bless you all as we journey together into the new millennium. ■

Joyce CSF

novices can expect to undergo. Hawks had to be caught, bought or taken from the nest, and kept in a quiet building. They were allowed to fly free by day, returning to take food and roost. Before the training could begin they had to be vermin-free and induced to accept the proximity of man. When ready, they would be hooded to persuade them to sit reasonably calmly on the fist. Only gradually would their vision be restored, while they were being kept awake and fed. It takes a 'long-suffering man', one authority claimed. Much of the falconer's art lay in assessing the amount and type of food which his hawk's species, state of health and flying programme demanded. The trickiest time was the moult, a fretful season for the hawk and worrying for the falconer, who had to restore his bird quickly to healthy flying condition.

Novices are not caught like hawks but they do require training and formation. At first there is usually a free pattern of coming and going. Formal entry into community involves being clothed but not 'hooded'! Novices' eyes must be opened gradually to the loving judgements of God, as they begin the lifelong process of being 'clothed with Christ'. To be 'vermin-free' is not an entry requirement! But a physical and psychological assessment is required before clothing, to give a realistic assessment of strengths and weaknesses to be worked on in community life. Many entrants need to be trained in living at close quarters with others. For years they may have lived alone, not having to share a bathroom or close a door quietly! Although not deliberately kept

awake, novices may spend sleepless hours discerning whether God really is calling them to this distinctive way of living Christian life. An uninterrupted time of testing in community is part of the training. Those responsible for formation certainly need to be long-suffering.

In a novitiate programme, food will be important, food for the body but also for mind and heart. The integrity of response to the call of Christ in sisters and brothers, their willingness to grow and change, binding and freeing 'structures', will all be seen with the fresh eyes of novices. Customs such as corporate silence may surprise or even dismay, until understood. There will also be the equivalent of the 'moult', periods of difficulty in community living or prayer. The 'fretful' season comes round often as we are being formed in the image of Christ! Sensitivity, courage and wisdom are needed by all concerned. 'Peace, quiet, good feeding with interesting titbits', recommended for hawks, are important for us all.

Flying Free

When the falconer was finally able to fly the hawk loose in the hunting fields he had probably invested in her large expense and long hours of sometimes frustrating devotion. Sometimes he saw all this vanish literally into the blue. Something similar may happen in community when in the course of formation it is discerned that a novice's vocation lies elsewhere. Then pastoral care for the individual who 'flies free' is ongoing.

Other novices fly free but within the

community, and this is marked by public vows: a deep joy for the novice and an opportunity for re-commitment for the rest. Profession as an extension of Baptismal promises offers a glimpse of the culminating joy to which we are all called. Medieval huntsmen celebrated a successful hunt with 'Sparviter's Pie'. The community may hold a comparable feast, its own 'Pie', rejoicing in those called by the Lord to Religious Life, its recipe seasoned by the salt of humour and generous handfuls of common sense, and baked in a hot oven fired by the Love of God: in all, a foretaste of Paradise.

Gaston Phoebus in *Livre de Chasse* wrote: "It is my firm belief that [hunters] will enter Paradise: not the centre of Paradise, but some corner . . ." Religious share a like hope of God's mercy. Franciscans at the York Conference in 1999 sang of the Lord Jesus as 'the stairway to heaven'. We are called to work and pray for the coming of the Kingdom.

Rooted in Jesus

the living signs of your presence
to the men and women of our time,
may our lives of prayer speak
in a new way to a new age.
Give us courage for the journey
and hope for its ending.

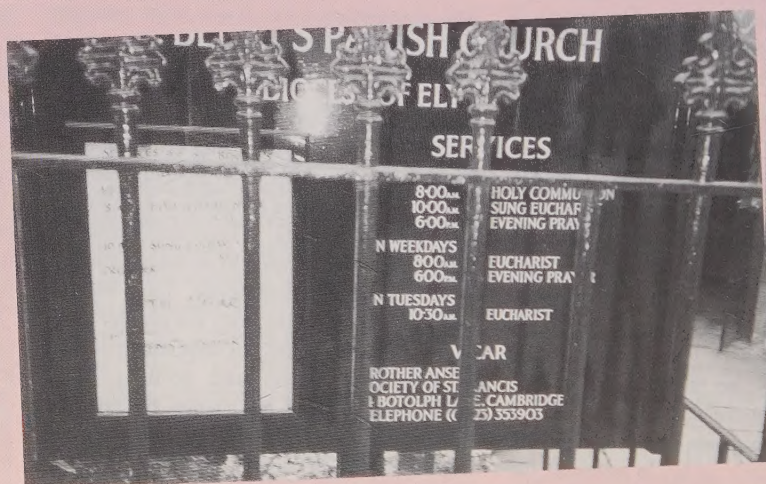
Use us, Father,
for the coming of your Kingdom
into the hearts of all. ■

Author's note: Thanks to Clare SSC, Joan SSC, Marion Fry (Companion CR) and Susan Williams for help in writing this article

SSF



SSF has been celebrating its sixty years since the founding of Saint Bees centre, at the University of the North, colleges, and in the local parishes. The work undertaken that, over the range of



THE SOCIETY OF ST FRANCIS

1 THE BISHOPS PROTECTOR

Richard Appleby *Protector General & Australia New Zealand*
 Keith L Ackerman *PCR America*
 George Connor *Deputy, New Zealand*
 Jerry A Lamb *SSF America*
 Thomas Ray *SSF America*
 Michael Scott-Joynt *Pacific Islands*
 Tevita Talanoa *Europe*
 Depuy, PNG

2 THE FIRST ORDER

THE MINISTERS
 Daniel *Minister General SSF*
 Teresa *Minister General CSF*

Andrew Mann *Solomon Islands Region*
 Clifton Henry *Papua New Guinea Region*
 Colin Wilfred *Australia New Zealand Province*
 Damian *SSF European Province*
 Joyce *SSF European Province*
 Justus *SSF American Province*
 Pamela Clare *CSF American Province*

3 AMERICA

Anthony Michael (Stroud, Australia)
 Derek, *Guardian*
 John George
 Justus

4 MT. SINAI, Long Island

Clark Berge, *Guardian*
 Dunstan
 Jason Robert, *Novice Guardian*
 Jon Bankert
 Leo Anthony

5 SAN FRANCISCO

Antonio Sato
 Jude, *Guardian, Provincial Secretary*
 Robert Hugh
 Thomas
 Novice:
 Guire

6 Saint Francis House

Catherine Joy
 Cecilia, *Provincial Secretary*
 Elizabeth Ann, *Novice Guardian*
 Jean
 Pamela Clare
 Ruth (Family Link)

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND

Australia

BRISBANE

Daniel
 Donald Campbell, *Guardian*
 Francis
 Lionel
 Peter-Christian
 William

STROUD

Bruce-Paul, *Novice Guardian, Provincial Secretary*

Novice:

Graham

New Zealand

AUCKLAND - Long Bay

Andrew Philip
 Brian
 Colin Wilfred, *Guardian*
 Damian Kenneth
 Jerry Ross
 Novice:
 Jeffrey Francis

ON DETACHED SERVICE

Alfred Boonkong (Malaysia)
 Christopher John (Korea)
 Noel-Thomas (Sydney)

ON LEAVE

Masso

7 EUROPE

ALNMOUTH

David Stephen
 Edward
 Gregory, *Guardian*
 Harry
 Nathaniel
 Paschal
 Novice:
 Oswin Paul

BIRMINGHAM - St Clare's House

Alan Michael, *Guardian*
 Benjamin (Harborne)
 Desmond Alban
 Novices:
 Augustine Thomas
 David Alban

BIRMINGHAM - St Francis House

Alison Mary
 Angela Helen
 Elizabeth, *Guardian*
 Gwendryd Mary (Milford Haven)
 Hilary, *Provincial & General Secretary*
 Moyra
 Veronica

CAMBRIDGE

Alistair
 Anselm
 Dominic Christopher
 Martin
 Michael, *Guardian*

9 COMPTON DURVILLE

Beverley
 Christine James
 Helen Julian, *Sister-in-Charge, Novice Guardian*

EDINBURGH

Kenigern John

GLASGOW

Amos, *Brother in Charge*

Robert Coombes

Ronald (Saltcoats)

GLASSHAMPTON

Austin
 Benedict, *Guardian*
 David Francis, *Novice Guardian*
 Malcolm
 Nicholas Alan
 Ramon
 Raymond Christian
 Wilfrid (Hereford)

HILFELD

Aidan
 Athanasius Farfu
 Edmund (New Milton)
 Geoffrey
 Giles

ALNMOUTH

Hubert
 James Edward
 Jason
 Kevin
 Matthew
 Paul

ALNMOUTH

Philip Bartholomew
 Raphael (Dorchester)
 Reginald
 Samuel, *Guardian*
 Trisram
 Vincent
 Novice:
 Christopher

LONDON - Britton

Jennie
 Joyce
 Nan
 Rose
 Novice:
 Carol

LONDON - Gladstone Park

Angelo, *Provincial Secretary*
 Damian
 David Jardine (Belfast)
 Jonathan, *Provincial Bursar*

LONDON - Puddington

Christian
 James William
 Paul Anthony
 Seraphim

LONDON - Praislow

Arnold
 Donald
 John Francis, *General Secretary*
 Julian
 Thomas Anthony (Canada)

LONDON - Stegney

Bernard

Chris

Gina

Novice:

Martin Philip

NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME

Jannafar
 Judith Ann
 Maureen
 Patricia Clare (Abergavenny)
 Teresa, *Guardian*

AFRICA

James Anthony (Tanzania)
 Roger Alexander (Zimbabwe)

ON LEAVE

David
 Hugo
 Nolan Tobias
 Peter Douglas
 Philip

PACIFIC ISLANDS

Papua New Guinea Region

CHINATOWN, LAE

Cecil Okun
 Clifton Henry
 Gilson Kira, *Regional Bursar*
 Peter Kevin
 Selwyn Suma, *Guardian*

DIPOTURU

Timothy Joseph
 GOROKA - SIOMOROMORO
 Andrew (Melanesian Institute)
 Anthony, *Brother in Charge*
 Daniel Gorna
 Novices:
 Benstead Ponoba
 Mishael Enga

HARURO

Bray Ungia
 Leonard Richardson
 Lester, *Novice Guardian*
 Moses Vavakidha
 Oswald, *Guardian*
 Philip Elobae (Newton College)
 Novices:
 Bevan
 Eutyclus
 Ham Kavia
 Harold Joimoba
 Job
 Leon Arisa
 Murray

20 KATERADA

Nathanael Gani, *Brother in Charge*
 Novice:
 Wallace Yoweto

MARTYRS' SCHOOL

Charles Iada
 Hugh
 Laurence Hauje

UKAKA

Smith Tovebae, *Brother in Charge*
 Novices:
 Robert Eric
 Ronald Goviro

Solomon Islands Region

Honiara Custody

21 AUKI
 Colin (Foulaia)
 Pateson Kwa ai, *Brother in Charge*
 Novices:
 Charles Katea
 Joel Keremahai
 Leonard Lui

HONIARA

Andrew Mann
 Ashley Vaisu, *Regional Secretary*
 Godfrey Kemangava, *Guardian*
 George Hiniodi, *Regional Bursar*
 Samson Amoni
 Mamane

KIRA KIRA

Shedrick Iru
 Stanley Sinewala
 Aien Latumana
 Comins Romano
 Martin Tauwea, *Brother in Charge*
 Wilson Bosa
 Novice:
 Jonas Balunga

Hautambu Custody

HAUTAMBU - La Verna

Dudley Palmer (Theological College)
 Gabriel Maclasi (Theological College)
 Nicholas Tai
 Peter Ambuofa, *Guardian*
 Samson Sibo (Vanga Point)
 Novices:
 Geoffrey Gerefoa
 Ismael Irani
 James Kera
 James Sou
 John Knox
 Lent Fugui
 Lionel Lakiniyila
 Nathanael Volohi
 Noel Kwaelata
 Robert Gilba

HAUTAMBU - Little Portion

Robert Briet, *Brother in Charge*
 Winston Paoni
 Novice:
 Bartholomew Maravovo

26 THE SECOND ORDER

The Community of St Clare
 at Freeland, UK,
 the Poor Clares of
 Reparation, M. Sinai, USA,
 & the Clare Community at
 Stroud, NSW, Australia

27 THE THIRD ORDER

THE MINISTERS

Keith Slater, *Minister General & Australia*

Dorothy Brooker, *New Zealand*

Ania Catron, *America*

Carolyn Clapperton, *Europe*

Anne Korze, *Africa*

The Officers,
 Brothers & Sisters

28 POSTULANTS ASPIRANTS

to the three Orders

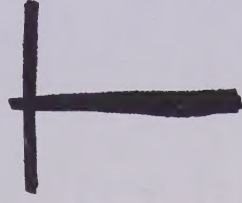
29 COMPANIONS & ASSOCIATES

30/ Franciscan brothers &
 31 sisters in other communities
 and of other communities
 throughout the world, especially
 The Community of the Divine
 Compassion, Zimbabwe,
 The Korean Franciscan Brotherhood,
 the Order of St Francis in
 California, USA

1 January 2000



**THE SOCIETY
OF SAINT FRANCIS**



Lord Jesus Christ,
you are both Alpha and Omega,
the beginning and the end,
and your years shall never fail:
grant to us faithful hearts
that, in all things, we may please you
and glorify your holy name. Amen.

Mozarabic Sacramentary

And for our departed Brothers & Sisters...

January	7	Helen Elizabeth CSF 1950
1		Joseph OSF 1979
2		Arthur SSF 1990
8		Margaret Mary CSF 1946
17		Gabriel CSF 1999
18		Thaddeus SSF 1995
22		Patrick SSF 1992
23		Gregory SSF 1971
27		Jeremy SSF 1966
February	28	William Sitt SDC 1937
1		Anthony Jones SSF 1961
	31	Andrew SDC 1946
4		Jerome SSF 1986
9		April
15	5	Ian SSF 1991
24	13	Christopher SSF 1973
26	14	Edgar SSF 1995
	19	Randall SSF 1983
	21	Alban SSF 1989
March	27	Mary Clare CSF 1963
4		David SSF 1994

[illegible]

WEDNESDAYS IN LENT
St Mary's Northampton

HOLY WEEK 16 - 22 APRIL
St Alban's, Holborn
Lichfield
St Peter's, Stockton-on-Tees
St Mary the Virgin, Malware
Bradwell-on-Sea
St Bene't's, Cambridge
St Michael's, Verwood
St Anne's, Ynyshir, The Rhondda
Westbury-on-Trym
Fincham Group of Parishes
Amherst, The Netherlands
St John's, Failssworth
St Paul's, Stockingford
St Oswald's, Oswestry
Penistone & Thurlstone
St Michael & All Angels, Bedford Park

Martin
Angelo
Bernard
Chris
Donald
Edward
Giles
Jackie
Jason
John Francis
Malcolm
Martin
Martin Philip
Moyra
Nathanael
Raymond Christian
Tristram

Please pray for the repose of the soul of our brother,
Gordon SSF,
 who died peacefully on 10 September 1999

[illegible]

MARCH	
2 - 6	<i>Reginald</i>
4	<i>Samuel</i>
6	<i>Martin</i>
10 - 12	<i>Bernard</i>
10 - 13	<i>Martin</i>

Monastic Musicians' Conference, Plusgarden
Wells Cathedral Men's Breakfast
Quiet Day, Peterborough Deanery Clergy
Chippenhams Retreat, Glastonbury
Pre-mission Visit, St. Thomas, Leobach

St Michael & All Angels, Bedford Park

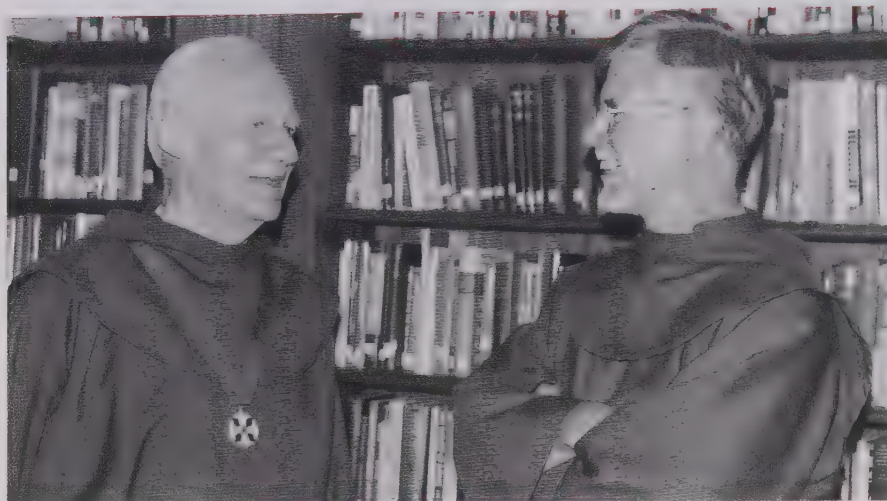
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Community Routes

Joyce Yarrow CSF



Brothers Edward with Brother Damian

◆◆ Cross of St Augustine

To the joy of all, Brother **Edward** was presented with the Cross of Saint Augustine, in a short ceremony in the Chapel of Lambeth Palace, along with five others, on 6 October 1999. This distinguished award, established by Archbishop Michael Ramsey in 1965 and presented to fewer than 150 people to date, is given 'for long and exceptionally distinguished service within the Anglican Communion.'

In his citation, Archbishop Carey referred to Edward's unbounded enthusiasm, his zeal for the gospel, his sense of fun and his ability to tell people how good the world is, which has offered an enormous amount to the Church of England and to God's church as a whole. Mention was made of his work as a friar and a priest in encouraging the vocations in others, both to the Third Order of the Society and in awakening many to ordained ministry. We heartily congratulate him, and add our own thanks!

◆◆ College of Evangelists

"And he gave some to be evangelists. . ." With this text from Saint Paul's letter to the Ephesians the Archbishop of York began his stirring sermon at the inauguration of the College of Evangelists, an event which took place at Church House, Westminster, on 11 October 1999. The House of Bishops had decided to launch this new project. It has taken seven years to set it up, but the Archbishop said that this was fairly quick progress for the Church of England!

It is neither a building nor a training institution, but it provides a way for calling together a body of men and women who share

in the spreading of the gospel beyond the confines of their own parishes and dioceses.

The Archbishop of Canterbury presided at the inaugural service and commissioned the first thirty members of the College, which included four brothers of SSF, namely **Angelo, Bernard, Martin and Samuel**.

The mandate for the establishment of the College ends with these words: "Our methods must stem from our conviction of the need to incarnate the Gospel that all of humanity is made in the image of God, with inherent value and dignity."

◆◆ First Order Chapter, Oz

Brother David Francis writes:

With our Ministers, **Damian** and **Joyce, Samuel** and I represented the Brothers and **Chris** and **Gina** the Sisters, of this Province at the First Order Chapter (FOC) in Brisbane, Australia. This is a meeting of the Ministers of the First Order, plus two representatives from each Province, held every three years. The FOC is a wonderful opportunity to share, albeit briefly, in the life and work of another Province and to meet with Brothers and Sisters from throughout the world.

This Chapter was held at St John's Anglican College in the University of Queensland. It was particularly special because the Interprovincial Third Order Chapter (IPTOC) was also meeting there and we came together for a bible study, prayers and the Eucharist each day. We also spent two days in joint meetings, and were joined by local Tertiaries for the inauguration of Keith Slater as the new Minister General of the Third Order.

On our first evening, we were given a very warm Aboriginal welcome by Aunty Vi McDermott and friends, experiencing the delights of the didgeridoo and aboriginal dancing. This was followed by a buffet meal

and an opportunity to get to know one another, including creating a human map when we were able to see just where SSF is in the world.

During the two days when the First and Third Orders met together we looked at experiences of God in our lives and at Australian Spirituality. We also looked at the ways in which we worked together, identifying many examples of our collaborative ministry and at how we could build on the progress so far.

For the rest of the time we met as separate Chapters and the FOC looked at ways in which we could "Build up each other in love". We recognised that we were a fairly small group of Brothers and Sisters, spread thinly throughout the world, and were reminded that as followers of Francis we were called to work in small ways to further the work of God.

◆◆ Justice & Peace Links

Sister Rowan Clare writes:

'Peace be with you'. How often have you heard that without really taking it in? Yet for so many people, peace, justice and basic human rights are a distant dream. Many Christians would like to do more to help them become a reality, but aren't sure where to start. There is so much need, it is easy to become discouraged and wonder what difference it will really make.

The Jubilee 2000 campaign is just one example of how ordinary people really can be heard. **Jonathan** and I, C/SSF *Justice and Peace Links* representatives, were among the tens of thousands forming a human chain in Cologne during the G8 summit last summer, together with several Tertiaries, Companions, and representatives of other communities, to encourage world leaders to reduce the stranglehold of debt. The Archbishop of Cologne reminded us that Christians may not call God 'our Father' unless they are willing to stand alongside their brothers and sisters in need. In October, I took part in the final leg of the Pilgrimage against Poverty, organised by Church Action on Poverty, which sought to highlight deprivation in Britain. The pilgrimage route, 670 miles in total from Iona to London, passed 11 C/SSF houses; a salutary reminder that while our poverty is chosen, many have no such freedom. On occasions like this, our habits can be a visible sign of the Church's presence and our intimate connection as Franciscans with the whole of God's suffering creation. As *Justice and Peace Links*, our rôle is to remind all Franciscans of that aspect of our calling.

Justice and Peace Links was set up in 1980, originally for members of Roman Catholic Religious Communities: C/SSF have been

represented, along with other Anglican communities, since 1986. The Links pass on information and ideas to the rest of the community; we circulate petitions, encourage people to write letters, go to meetings or support initiatives with their prayer and activity. Many houses now have information points where guests, too, can find out more. *Justice and Peace Links* exist to make sure Religious Communities have a voice to speak out for the poor, the marginalised and the oppressed, and to make sure that the voice is heard where it matters.

◆◆ ARC

In an effort to enable greater co-operation and communication between the different groups, Anglican Religious Communities in Europe (ARC) is in the process of development. Its aims are to be at the service of – and to represent and interpret Religious Life to – the Church and society, to support, encourage and challenge, and to promote communication, collaboration, co-operation and interaction between religious communities and to promote ecumenical relations and inter-faith dialogue, particularly among those living the Religious Life. **Christine James CSF** is the secretary of ARC until September 2000.

For more information about the different groups, see *The Anglican Religious Communities Year Book* (ARCYB) 2000-2001, published by Canterbury Press, Norwich (ISBN 1853113190), available from Hilfield Friary Shop, price £5.50p.

◆◆ Religious in Romania

Brother Paschal writes:

I had the privilege of attending the Eleventh Congress of International Inter-confessional Religious. The Congress meets bi-annually: to foster mutual understanding of each other's traditions; to create friendships between different Orders and Churches; and, through fidelity to our Lord from a Scriptural basis, to progress along the road towards Christian Unity. Seventy Religious from the Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Anglican traditions met at the foot of the holy mountain of Durau in Romania, where a youthful community of forty nuns had reclaimed their monastery following the fall of the Romanian communist regime.

The papers from different speakers centred round the theme of "Art and Liturgy as a Means of Cohesion and Unity". Father **George Guiver CR** gave the Anglican contribution, which was very well received. For those of us who had very little experience of the Orthodox Liturgy, the paper on "The Mystery of Christ in Art and Liturgy", given by Archbishop Daniel Ciobotea, was a profound gift, as we were taken into the faithfulness of Orthodoxy. A Lutheran Sister from Germany and a Belgium Benedictine presented the other ecumenical contributions.

Outside the main talks there were also opportunities to learn of the struggles of monastic life under Communist rule, as well as Ukrainian culture and monasticism. However, the main ingredient of the Congress was the corporate 'entry' into the rich liturgical round of the Orthodox Church, where we recognised that we are already experiencing a real communion with each other, even if it is impaired. Nevertheless, during careful and polite discussions, there were moments when the serious obstacles to unity were faced.

I was able, along with Father **Nicolas Stebbing CR**, to visit other monasteries and Orthodox parishes before the Congress began. The welcome and hospitality shown became for me a "sacrament" of Christ's presence.

The difference in culture and tradition between Religious Life in Eastern and Western Europe was clearly felt, but there, in the venerable monastic sites of Romania, a rich light of faith and practice both encouraged and judged my own religious life.

The often youthful monks and nuns, by their sheer faithfulness to God, reminded us of the priority of God over earthly preoccupations, and yet of how the missionary rôle of beauty and art and liturgy brought joy and resurrection too.

The contribution from the West, showing the social dimension from apostolic or mixed communities, encouraged (we hope) the new generation of monastics in Romania to see if such activities might be right or not within their own tradition.

The Congress, under the courteous care of Father Nicolas, now looks forward to ways in which Religious might meet locally and how individual "Covenant relationships" might be made between specific religious houses.

One of the ancient Orthodox titles for Romania is "The Garden of the Mother of God". I indeed experienced this to be true.

◆◆ SSF Edinburgh

The Brothers have served in various parts of Edinburgh since 1973 when the late Bishop Ken Carey invited SSF to share in the ministry at St David's Church and the huge housing area around Pilton. More recently the Brothers have been located more centrally, to Lothian Road in the City Centre. At its recent



Keith Slater TSSF, newly-elected Minister General of the Third Order

Provincial Chapter, the Brothers have agreed to bring this work to an end, giving thanks to the Council of West End Churches for their generous accommodation at the Little Portion Friary. **Kentigern John**, a member of the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church and also Youth Chaplain to the Diocese will continue to live at the Friary until June 2000 when it is planned that he will move to the Friary in Auckland, New Zealand for a twelve months' placement.

The Society will be marking the closure of the House nearer the time, when the opportunity will be taken to give thanks to God and also to the many who have supported the Brothers and their ministry in prayer and practical support.

◆◆ Round Up

Our novice brother **Matthew Karosa** died suddenly in Papua New Guinea on 8 September, aged 23 years.

Christopher John has arrived from Korea for an extended visit, which began with a period of study at the Franciscan Study Centre in Canterbury. The two novices of the **Korean Franciscan Brotherhood** are also visiting the Province for two months and will be staying in SSF houses . . . **James Edward** and **Athanasius** have arrived to live at Hilfield. **David** is on Leave of Absence.

Chad San Andres has withdrawn from the noviciate.

Simeon Christopher has been released from first vows. ■

Days at Compton Durville

Saturday 11 March, Third Order Day, 10.00 am to 4.00 pm

Welcome to a day of prayer, reflection and fellowship

Please bring a packed lunch

Saturday 10 June, Open Day, Sing of the Lord's Goodness!

12 noon Welcome and opening worship; Please bring a packed lunch

1.30 pm Creative workshops; **3.15 pm** Afternoon tea

4.00 pm Eucharist; **5.00 pm** Farewells

For more information about either event, please contact

Saint Francis Convent, Compton Durville, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5ES

Tel: 01460 240473 Fax: 01460 242360 email: csf.compton@talk21.com



Christian education: where are the nation's children going to find faith?

by John Hall

The 2001 census will ask explicit questions about people's religious affiliation. In the meantime, we can only make assumptions on the basis of the available evidence.

The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) publishes a Factsheet on Ethnic Minorities in Britain, which interprets the evidence. It estimates that there are forty million Christians in Britain, between one and one-and-a-half million Muslims, up to half a million each of Hindus and Sikhs, 300,000 Jews and 130,000 Buddhists. Ethnic minorities, including black Caribbeans and Africans, make up altogether five-&-a-half per-cent of the population.

For the overwhelming majority of white Britons of Christian heritage educated during the last thirty years, religion does not make a significant impact on their lives. On the other hand, not many people are positively anti-religious. According to the European Values Survey 1990, only 4.4% of the population are avowedly atheist. The CRE Factsheet quotes evidence, gathered by the Policy Studies Institute, which demonstrates that, whilst for at least two-thirds of people of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage in Britain religion is very important to the way they live their lives, for the white population of Britain religion is very important for no more than four per-cent of 16-34 year-olds.

Can that be changed? There is talk of young people's spirituality but little sign of them finding answers through the Church. Schools must have a part to play. What goes on in school can, of course, only be a small part of the story; parental attitudes and the prevailing norms in society will continue to have a dominating influence. There are some signs that RE is beginning to stage a comeback. At a recent conference at Church House, three professors of religious education spoke of a renewed importance and confidence for RE. Inspection, model syllabuses and the new popular short course GCSE have all made a positive impact.

The Chief Inspector's last annual report lent some encouragement to this view. Of primary schools he said, 'Non-compliance with the requirement to teach RE to all pupils is less than in previous years, and there has been a slight improvement in pupils' progress . . . there is more good, and less unsatisfactory, teaching than last year.' Of secondary RE he said, 'Pupils are making more progress than previously in understanding concepts, symbolism and the impact of religion on people's lives.'

RE is, however, only a small part of the story. Maintained schools in England and Wales are required to arrange for each pupil, not withdrawn by his or her parents, to attend a

daily act of collective worship wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. They must also provide for the spiritual development of pupils and of the community. The Chief Inspector reported, 'Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory in two-fifths of all [secondary] schools. In a number of schools prayer plays an important rôle in encouraging pupils to reflect on spiritual matters. Teachers often lack understanding of the nature of spiritual development or of the ways in which it may be promoted. Seven in ten schools fail to comply fully with the requirement for collective worship.' The situation is better in primary schools, where only one school out of ten is non-compliant. 'Where worship is carefully planned to contribute to spiritual development, it does so by creating an atmosphere of reverence and opportunities for reflection in a period of calm and quietness; by providing opportunities for pupils to learn and think about the values of Christianity and other religions; and by encouraging participation and self-expression.'

There is talk of young people's spirituality but little sign of them finding answers through the Church.

The Board of Education and The National Society continue to use every opportunity to promote spiritual development and worship in schools of all kinds and to support RE. The Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church working together recently persuaded the Government to give greater prominence to spiritual development of pupils in the revision of the National Curriculum for September 2000. The National Society has published extensively on these matters. The National Society's new website (which can be found at: www.churchschools.co.uk) will have frequently changing resources for collective worship freely available to all teachers.

The Church of England pioneered education well before state involvement. The Church's concern for education in all schools does not mask the opportunities created by the Church's own network of schools. Whilst there are many Christian educators in schools of all kinds, it is really now only possible to guarantee Christian education in Church schools. The Chief Inspector reports that provision for spiritual development generally receives greater attention and is significantly better in voluntary-aided church schools than

in the maintained sector. Even there, complacency would be quite inappropriate.

Greater public accountability has meant that many Church schools have been recognised as making a strong impact and have become increasingly popular with parents, many of whom would deny the importance of religion for themselves. The General Synod has debated the opportunity the popularity and relative success of so many Church schools offers the Church. A year ago it supported, with no dissenters, a resolution recognising that Church schools stand at the centre of the Church's mission to the nation.

In response, the Archbishops' Council has initiated a review to look at three aspects of the Church's provision: the effectiveness of Church schools, the development of provision and the recruitment and training of Christian teachers. Lord Dearing, with his strong track record of educational review in the past five years, will chair the group. The review will consider what contribution is made to a school's success, academic and otherwise, by its distinctive Christian character. Does it, in fact, contribute positively to the local Church's mission and to the faith development of the pupils and community?; and if so how? One in four primary schools in England is a Church of England school but only one secondary school in twenty. Secondary schools reject large numbers of pupils and thus are seen by some to be selective and divisive. Clearly there should be greater secondary provision. How can that be achieved? Finally, Christian education depends on Christian teachers willing and able to share their faith in a positive but open way. How can a supply of such teachers be ensured and what should be the rôle of the Church's eleven colleges of higher education?

At a recent conference at Lambeth Palace this last issue was addressed. A Government minister, DfEE officials and senior staff of government educational agencies endorsed the need for Christian teachers and promised active partnership with the Church in recruitment. The Archbishop of Canterbury spoke of teaching as a Christian vocation and a Christian ministry. It must be true that only teachers for whom their Christian faith is very important to the way they live their lives will be able to offer a genuinely Christian education and enable their pupils to find a living Christian faith. We all have a rôle in discerning and encouraging such vocations.

If the distinctive character of Church schools as places of encounter with the Christian gospel and Christian life can be strengthened and developed in response to public demand, it might mean two things: first, that there is a generation of parents aware of the need for spiritual development for their children and for themselves; and second, that there might be a new generation growing up, aware of the Church's response to their questions of faith and life, perhaps even accepting the answers for themselves. ■

John Hall is General Secretary of the Church of England Board of Education.

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Book Reviews

Brother Ramon SSF
When they crucified my Lord
 BRF, London, 1999, £6.99
 ISBN 1841010243

Lent may be late in coming this year but Brother Ramon has already given it very thorough and serious thought! His second Lent Book written for the Bible Reading Fellowship offers a resourceful scheme of daily readings focussed on the characters of the Passion, ending in the seven words from the Cross during Holy Week itself.

With printed-out daily readings, Ramon draws the reader, with earthy illustrations, into the closer presence of the loving Christ until there is indeed trembling within the soul. *Were you there?* is the question, and he takes responsibility for guiding the persuaded onlooker to enter the central mysteries of Christian faith. As Jesus needed 'to plumb the lowest depths of human need and dereliction before the miracle could be accomplished within (the disciple),' so we are invited to allow the Cross to draw us in to communion with Christ.

Like his first Lent book, *The Way of Love* (1994), Ramon again asks that the reader gives an hour each day for time to absorb the daily readings and with a suggested prayer and reflection offered at the end. The content of his commentary is both very readable and instructive. In his inimitable and free-flowing style we journey with him through events of his own personal journey, as a child in South Wales, as he discovers aspects of God's call to him, and as he expresses his yearnings to proclaim a Gospel for life today. For those with opportunity to add the dimension of a group study, there is provision in the appendix for seven meetings before Easter Day.

This is Ramon at his best: colourful, anecdotal, systematic, rich in content, born out of a profound life of prayer and mystery, soaked in the mystery of the crucified Lord who seeks to burst into life within his people. *Were you there? I want to be!*

Damian SSF

David F. Ford
Self and Salvation: Being Transformed
 CUP, London, 1999, £12.95 paperback
 ISBN 0521416078

'Dear Reader of the Franciscan, Let me begin with a warning. Don't think this book is going to be bedside reading. It's going to be a tough haul. If, like me, you're more familiar with theology than philosophy, I should advise you to start at the end with the last chapter, called "Feasting", and with Traherne's "Cascade of joy" from one of his unpublished manuscripts. Then work backwards to the two chapters which compare and contrast (as the exam papers say), Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Therese of Lisieux. By that time you will be reaching the centre of the book with its meditations on such themes as the eucharistic self, facing Jesus Christ, the

resurrection as a God-sized event, and the gifts of non-identical repetition. By then you may be ready to approach the opening section of the book with its careful working through of a number of contemporary searches after meaning and integrity in the borderlands between philosophical analysis and theological enquiry.

'Of course, if you are already familiar with the writings of Emmanuel Levinas, Paul Ricoeur and Eberhard Jungel, whose work is discussed in the first part of the book, you won't need to adopt this "Alice through the Looking Glass" approach. You will calmly take the book in your hands and read it through sensibly from the beginning to the end and you certainly won't need my commendation of it.'

Well, that was how I found myself reviewing this book, and I've never written a review like that before. The fact that I discovered that I wanted to address you personally is itself a tribute to the power which emanates from its pages. David Ford, its author, Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, is a writer who, more than most, believes in face to face conversation and exchange. He is always, in this book, in conversation with a great number of dialogue partners, some of whom I have mentioned. For him, truth is found in an infinitely expanding and varied network of giving and receiving between people who find themselves in being found by God. As a friend of his remarks 'Beyond the self is community, beyond the individual endeavour a tradition, and beyond radical doubt a trust. Beauty and truth are somehow in dialogue with a particular community which attempts in its joys and sufferings, its successes and mistakes, its ecstasy and incompleteness, to keep itself in good repair.' A very special repair job has been undertaken here. Indeed, I

think it is more than a matter of repairing. This may not be an easy read but once you get into it, from whichever end, it certainly won't be a disappointing one.

A. M. Allchin

Angela Ashwin
Woven into Prayer
A flexible pattern of daily prayer through the Christian Year
 Canterbury Press Norwich, 1999, £12.99
 ISBN 185311247X

This is a truly refreshing book, contemplative and practical. Angela Ashwin has great sympathy with those wanting to follow an ordered life of prayer who find themselves prevented by the proper pressures of their daily lives. Aimed principally at them, the book is also to be recommended to those who long to deepen their prayer and to those who are, perhaps temporarily, weary of their normal pattern. It is likely to be welcomed by a wide variety of people both inside and outside the churches. Well worth buying as a Christmas present, the volume is attractively presented, sturdy but easy to carry.

The year is divided into seasons drawn from a variety of sources. For each, four ways of being with God are provided each day in prayer. These are, 'A Thread for the Day' to ponder throughout the day; 'A Short Order of Daily Prayer' full of treasures old and new, which can be curtailed if necessary; 'A Quiet Space' to last from fifteen to thirty minutes; and a short 'Night Time Blessing'. When time allows, these may be used in their entirety. Otherwise a selection can be made taking almost no time at all yet still providing a sense of being with God, centred and nourished.

Helpful introductions to traditional forms of prayer are given simply through suggestions for the use of quiet space, in the appendices and in the introduction. Also included is an invitation to help the author with some research into the connection between the world of spirituality and church worship – surely worth following up.

Dorothy Dennis TSSF, Winchester

Brother Ramon SSF
A Month with Saint Francis
 SPCK, London, 1999, £7.99
 ISBN 0281052727

Yet again Brother Ramon has used his many gifts and wide experience in bringing alive the life and inspiration of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Through meditation and reflection, Ramon opens up the life of the Saint, covering aspects of Francis' life and ministry, the City of Assisi itself, the earthquake of September 1997 and leading us on into a new millennium.

Set out in an easy-to-read form with simple, yet beautiful line drawings by Molly Dowell, and with instructions on how to use each day's offering, we are drawn to explore our own Christian life and witness through the example of Francis of Assisi.

In a style of writing that many find helpful, Ramon uses his wise thoughts and guidance to open up our own minds and then, with a gentle push, he helps us to explore our own thoughts and feelings, so making the reflection as

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personal as is our relationship with the Lord. He is trying to help us understand.

The book has been described as a perfect gift and would be as useful to someone beginning their Franciscan exploration as well as to someone who is already well on their journey with Francis.

Jason SSF

Don Cupitt

**The New Religion of Life
in Everyday Speech**

SCM Press, London, 1999, £8.95

ISBN 0334027632

A new meaning for the word 'life' from a belief in social reformers, and the qualitative openness of people to feelings, openness to grief, sharing it, might well be why the word 'life' has become: 'religiously charged, and more precisely: to signify a thing or power or agency that carries us along as a fast-flowing river carries a boat, this way and that.'

Expressions such as 'Life's what you make it', and 'For the life of me' showing that 'Life isn't God' but 'like the Holy Spirit, it wells up, flows out, proceeds, or comes forth'. The book is peppered with over a hundred idioms in bold type – easy to read – which have been classified under fourteen headings – all expressing in ordinary language something about the realism, mystery, immanence and transcendence of God; issues in current theological and intellectual debates.

Cupitt's contention is that in all areas of life there is a resource for desire, hope, philosophical curiosity, which has led people not to use the actual word 'God' anymore. This spiritual evolution was encouraged in the first place by the work of writers and poets from the beginning of the twentieth century for whom the teachings of the Old and New Testaments was an important part of their background. Unfortunately, this new theology in ordinary speech seems to rest on the fact that the situations, and the contexts in which these phrases occur, are not mentioned. DH Lawrence's punchlines especially become highfalutin maxims. 'Highly conscious of the new religious significance of "life"', he recommended Catherine Carswell, a writer and busy mum, 'a gentle faith in life itself.' Lawrence's philosophical musings were prompted that day (he was living in Mexico) by a sentimental picture of Catherine who was living in England, as well as by the constant, even exceedingly irksome picture of 'these women in breeches and riding-boots and sombreros'; 'inwardly it is a hard stone and nothingness' around him. Nevertheless, Cupitt's reflections on the meaning of these phrases can bring together successfully literature and religion. Consequently, they reach out to the community at large, beyond the multiplicity of language as an expression of a community of faith, beyond relativism and definitions of God through human standards only, to make us think about God: 'Life is a mysterious inner flame within each person: it is an outpouring energy, turning into language.'

Fabienne Bonnet TSSF, Cambridge

William J Short OFM

Poverty and Joy

DLT, London, 1999, £8.95

ISBN 0232522693

Although this is a small book, it covers a great deal of ground with a warm and perceptive evaluation of the spirituality of the Franciscan tradition. It is one of a series of books on the great Christian spiritual traditions, and displays the clarity which Philip Sheldrake calls for in his excellent preface.

Sheldrake says that all Christian spiritual traditions have their source in three things. First, they are rooted in scripture, and especially the gospels; second, they are not theoretical propositions but are attempts to live out concrete gospel values in historical and cultural contexts; and third, the experiences and insights of individuals and groups are dynamically related to the wider community of the Church, concerning the whole of life, indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Short first of all focuses on the lives of Saint Francis and Saint Clare, with an historical introduction to the Franciscan Order. He then takes up key themes of the Franciscan tradition which illuminate the gospel lived out in typical Franciscan radical style, yet related to the world. These illustrate how the spiritual and transcendent truths of God must be rooted in the humble and real path of compassionate discipleship in the world.

One of the refreshing aspects of this book is the way in which there appear cameo pictures of Franciscans like Bonaventure, Angela of Foligno, Jacopone da Todi, Duns Scotus and Ubertino da Casale. There are a fascinating few pages in which it is shown that the great Carmelite Teresa of Avila found vital teaching on the prayer of quiet from the writings of Franciscans like Giovanni de Caulibus, and the later Hentrik Herp, Francisco de Osuna and Bernardino de Laredo.

Further along, we find Short makes a creative link between the teaching of Bonaventure and Duns Scotus on creation/incarnation and the life and poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins. He makes the claim that Hopkins was saved from his ascetic suppression of the natural, to claim all things pure and beautiful as part of the cosmic revelation of God in Christ, precisely through these Franciscans. This seventh section of the book reveals a mystical vision which must be savoured, and then entered into contemplatively.

Following this, Short brings the study to an end by affirming the liveliness and relevance of Franciscan spirituality for today, in all its simplicity, humility and reconciling beauty. As he says in conclusion: 'Whenever (Francis) spoke to people, or birds, or wolves, he always began with these words, "May the Lord give you peace".'

Ramon SSF

Bob Holman

Faith in the Poor

Lion Books, London, 1998, £7.99

ISBN 0745942377

Bob Holman states that poor people are excluded from public expression of their

views. This serves to maintain inequality, which is at an unacceptable level.

Faith in the Poor here refers to their ability to be writers. Bob's faith results in seven life stories, written by the residents of the Easterhouse estate in Glasgow. These narratives are an eye-opener.

For the past ten years Bob Holman has combined living in Easterhouse with teaching part time in Glasgow University and writing. Once a professor of social administration, his analysis of the seven stories is illuminating. He concludes with three policy proposals for the government, to be funded, he suggests, by taxing the wealthy.

He has original advice, too, for churches in deprived areas. He suggests that leaders should be residents, preferably with local roots, so as to identify easily with the local culture, and stay long term.

(Note for readers in the third world – Poverty is here defined as living at below half the national wage. Easterhouse is Europe's largest housing estate and is without an Anglican church – they can't afford one!)

Amos SSF

Jan Kerkhofs

A Horizon of Kindly Light

A spirituality for those with questions

SCM Press, London, 1999, £14.95

ISBN 0334027438

This is a book which rewards perseverance, as the first two chapters trace the history of the idea of light in human thought until the time of Christ, a sort of chronological catalogue. For this reader, light dawned (so to speak) at the end of Chapter Two - 'Jesus' whole life is focussed on the horizon of this absolute future which he calls his present Father.'

The writer continues with the story of light in Christian thought - and in Chapter Four confronts us with 'the threatening void', that void which gives rise to the questions which we at the end of the second millennium cannot evade, we who are named in the subtitle as 'those with questions'.

Answers? 'The symbol of light . . . points forwards to a future, to a space where one can be expected. It touches the heart of consciousness, the specifically human consummation of the evolution of life, and heals anxiety, since it blots it out above the abyss of empty nothingness.'

Two things to notice about Kerkhof's own horizons (he is a Jesuit who works in Belgium and writes in Dutch) - they include continental Europe, almost to the exclusion of these islands - only Julian of Norwich, Cardinal Newman, and TS Eliot find a place among his authorities (a spiritual dimension for the European Union?), and they are not wide enough to embrace the light to be found in Islam, Buddhism and other faith communities.

Perhaps these limitations lessen the relevance of Chapter Six for the reader of the English translation (Towards a more Transparent Society). Nonetheless, a rewarding book for those attracted as much by the subtitle as by the title.

Anselm SSF

Brother Gordon SSF, RIP

*A sermon preached at his Interment of Ashes
at Hilfield Friary, by Brother Damian SSF*

In the moment of God's coming to them, they will kindle into flame, like sparks that sweep through the stubble. *Wisdom 3.7*

Gordon Grahame Tate, born in 1924, was a Geordie from Fenham: it was from there that he set out on a particular Christian pilgrimage, inspired by his old school's motto, *Willing Service*. His family church was St John's in Newcastle on Tyne.

*Brother Gordon SSF
died on 10 September 1999
at hospital in Newcastle
and his funeral mass
was at Alnmouth Friary.
He was aged seventy-five
years
and in the fortieth year
of his profession in vows.*

With two older brothers, John who became ordained and a middle brother who was killed in an RAF flying exercise, it became clear to Gordon, already disadvantaged with health problems and feeling a little overshadowed, that he had to step out on his own. A prompting came from John and from Fr Bernard Gurney Fox, just back from the Ashram in Poona. And so at the age of nineteen Gordon set out from the North East down to the South West and after being interviewed by both Douglas and Algy, he was admitted as a Junior Oblate in November 1943 at Hilfield. Later, twelve years later, he was clothed by Denis as a First Order novice, then professed by David in 1959 and he completed his dedication in life vows before Bishop Robert Mortimer, the Protector. If he had lived another month, he would have completed forty years in profession.

You have to read his book, *55 years in SSF*, to get a fuller taste of life under Fr Algy – which he describes at times to be more like serving in the Light Brigade: 'There's not to reason why, There's but to do and die.' It's reassuring that he doesn't complete the stanza! I heard him proudly boast that he reckoned in his book he had been more open and honest about how it was living under Fr Algy than had been recorded in other writings. Nevertheless he was clearly as devoted to Algy as anyone, and Gordon fell in with the various austerities required of a brother in those days, such as extreme cold and queuing to make your confession to Algy at up to two o'clock in the morning!

Gordon was sent to the House in Cable Street, East London, amidst the brothels and gambling dens. However, his attention was

caught, rather, by the waves of West Indian families arriving, totally unprepared for life in this country or for the opposition they met from local residents. His heart was deeply moved – and there began what I suppose came into being, his own style of Franciscan ministry, where he gathered people around him, where he made provision for them, drawing particularly the displaced and despised, and gently giving them his attention, and physical and spiritual hospitality. We have all marvelled, in his last address at the Ravensmount Residential Home in Alnwick, at how he drew together groups of the infirm and incapacitated for Bible Study, to feed on the Word of God over a cup of tea. He had become a master at 'making the occasion' for people, and he had been doing it virtually all his life. This was essentially what he took to Papua New Guinea, gathering together in the barracks at Port Moresby a group of policemen or Army soldiers to study the Scriptures. His six years in PNG made a missionary opportunity, not so much to preach but, let loose in some of the surrounding villages, he soon created natural occasions to study the Scriptures. This led of course to his receiving much hospitality himself. In return he gave his own warmth and friendship. He used this knack of forming people into groups around him for the work of God.

This talent for attracting others, joined with an attitude of self-giving, drew many people to Gordon, and their response was to give back to him a deeply-needed sense of acceptance which had previously never quite registered in him. Many of us would know more of the intense, serious brother with a big frame, who had never quite received a full recognition from his own family and, even within the Society, that acceptance felt slow and unclarified – indeed we would be as aware of his scowl as his smile. Outside, there is abundant evidence of his being acknowledged for his Christian demeanour, of his being owned and adored for his warmth and friendship: and that was visible up to the day he died. At Ravensmount, and from the nurses who saw him through the years of his dialysis to the time of his death in the Freeman Hospital, there have been multiple tears shed for one who deeply touched them.

How many people Gordon actually touched! The parties of refugees in Yeovil, the Methodist youth, the villagers at Buna in PNG where he had been initiated into their tribal family as a won-tok and our Brother Bray is a brother to him twice over. On the streets of Brixton, back in the seventies, one youth leader remarked 'Do you know who is the safest white face on these streets? It's yourself,' he told Gordon; 'They won't tell you themselves but they would do anything for you.' And that was true in Battersea, in Scunthorpe, and it will reflect the reason for

our visitors' presence here today.

Gordon, at first, had very much been pressed into the rôle of a servant, out of which he came to shine as a servant of his Master, Jesus. In doing so he not only learnt a means by which he found himself to be accepted, but he also shared his discovery to enrich the lives of countless poor, ignored, despised, discounted men and women that he sought out. Transforming the barriers of race, age, class, creed, he carried within him a spark that could sweep through the stubble and kindle the flame of Love and, with brotherly affection, he raised a state of servitude to the warmth and glow of friendship, with a spark that swept through fields of stubble. As our Brother Bernard once remarked, 'Gordon simply shone outside SSF' and people felt the privilege of his attention, of his ready acceptance; he was a wonderful ambassador for the Society.

I overheard one of the last conversations that Gordon had in the Freeman Hospital with Peter Lepine, our Tertiary who as a First-Order Brother had once served with Gordon out in PNG. Gordon knew he was dying and was very methodically saying his goodbyes, with that simple and direct manner that Gordon had. He added, 'and I'll have the kettle on, ready for when it's your turn.' He died as he lived, yet so relieved to be able to lay down the weight of his body burdened with the heaviness of debilitating health, and those inner fears that he was being outshone by other family or community stars. None of it was actually true, for he had learnt that being a prisoner for the Lord he had discovered what St Paul describes as 'the unfathomable riches of Christ'. He was no longer a servant: the Lord now called him friend, to whom he had given his total faith and trust, and for whose sake he had created and formed a network of friends who treasured him. He had lit up God's kingdom effectively. My guess is that the Lord will have created a flame strong enough in grace to catch a light under the kettle to welcome Gordon into the place of rest prepared for him in the heavenly mansion. Gordon, may you rest in peace and rise in glory. ■



Brother Gordon, circa 1946